One Year Later: Patient's Bills of Rights Provides America's Families with Health Care Freedoms

Millions of Children with Pre-existing Conditions Protected From Discrimination, Millions of Seniors Already Receiving Help with Prescription Drugs

One year ago today, the Affordable Care Act's "Patient's Bill of Rights" went into effect, putting families, not insurance companies, in control of their health care and providing new health care freedoms for everyone from children to young adults to seniors.

Thanks to the "Patient's Bill of Rights":

- Children under the age of 19 with pre-existing conditions and pregnant women are freed from discrimination by insurers,

- Young adults have the freedom to stay on their parents' insurance plan until the age of 26,

- Families are free from worry about unreasonable premium increases, annual limits, and losing their insurance when a family member gets sick,

- And seniors have more freedom to get the prescription drugs and preventative care they need.

Today, Americans are seeing a difference and health reform is providing lower costs and better health care coverage. Here's a look at the numbers:

- **Up to 17 million** children with pre-existing conditions are protected from discrimination

- **Over 500,000** additional young people gained health care insurance

- **165 million** Americans with private insurance are now protected from lifetime and annual limits on their coverage

- **1.3 million** seniors have received a 50% discount on brand name drugs, collectively saving **over $650 million** in out-of-pocket costs

- **19 million** seniors have already received one or more preventative services

- **1.3 million** seniors have taken advantage of a free Annual Wellness visit

- **4 million** small businesses are eligible for tax credits if they offer coverage to their employees

While Democrats are committed to reining in health care costs and protecting patients, Republicans have repeatedly voted to roll back these new health care freedoms and still have not offered a solution for skyrocketing health care costs and unfair insurance company practices. In addition, Republicans voted several times to end Medicare, raise health care costs and balance the budget on the backs of seniors. We hope they'll abandon their partisan agenda and work with us to ensure all Americans can access affordable health coverage, strengthen Medicare and reduce the deficit in a balanced way.

Office of Democratic Whip Steny H. Hoyer, 09/23/11